

Iowa College Student Aid Commission

Strategic Plan

2012 Update



IowaCollegeAid.gov
Your Financial Aid Connection

Iowa College Student Aid Commission 2010-2013 Strategic Plan - 2012 Update

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Strategic Goals

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Introduction to 2012 Update of the Strategic Plan

The Iowa College Student Aid Commission adopted its current four-year strategic plan at the start of 2010, a time of important developments in the national context for college access and student financial aid. The product of a thoroughgoing planning process, the agency's 2010-13 strategic plan addresses important ongoing challenges and provides an up-to-date template for the achievement of results during this period. With its 2012 strategic plan update, Iowa College Aid builds on the template of its four-year plan by bringing strategies, action steps, and measures current and adapting pertinent elements to the new direction provided by Governor Branstad's Goals.

The Iowa College Aid 2012 Strategic Plan Update highlights specific strategies to achieve the governor's goals. In addition, the governor's goals provide an overarching framework for the plan as a whole, consistent with the agency's core purposes.

- **Creating 200,000 jobs for Iowans**

Iowa College Aid addresses this goal by promoting postsecondary educational access. In so doing, the agency promotes development of the state's human capital, the single most important factor in creating jobs and attracting high-paying employers.

- **Increasing family income by 25 percent**

Postsecondary education is crucial to economic opportunity in the 21st century, the key to competitiveness in an increasingly knowledge-based global economy and the primary source of the skills required for virtually all well-paying careers. Education is the best personal investment and the most effective means of increasing family income. Iowa College Aid addresses this goal by promoting postsecondary educational access.

- **Restoring Iowa's educational system to #1 in the nation**

Iowa College Aid works in close partnership with educators, schools, and the Iowa Department of Education on several major initiatives in support of K-12 education and its role as a foundation for postsecondary education success. Iowa College Aid provides I Have A Plan Iowa, the state's designated college and career-planning tool, to all middle- and high schools in the state and provides support to teachers and counselors. In addition, the agency provides services to needy high school students throughout the state through the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs – Iowa.

- **Reducing the cost of government by 15 percent**

Since 2010, the agency has saved costs by relocating offices and reducing the number of staff by 20%. The agency continually seeks to control and reduce costs for example by collaborating with other agencies to reduce redundancies. Iowa College Aid has analyzed costs in a very deliberate and detailed way by conducting several LEAN Process events.

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Guiding Statements

Our Mission

We advocate for, and provide a continuum of services to support, Iowa students and families as they explore and finance educational opportunities beyond high school.

Our Motto

Your Financial Aid Connection.

Our Vision

All Iowans can achieve an education beyond high school.

Our Guiding Principles

We believe in the value of education and our commitment is to:

- Put students first.
- Uphold the public trust.
- Develop and empower a motivated, compassionate, and professional team.
- Create and nurture internal and external partnerships that benefit our customers.
- Provide services to our customers that exceed expectations and address their changing needs.
- Respect and honor the dignity of each other and all those we serve.

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Strategic Goals

1. Iowa College Student Aid Commission has funding that supports and enhances its services.
2. Iowa students and families plan, prepare, and pay for education beyond high school.
3. Iowa College Student Aid Commission is Iowa's partner for value added higher education information and resources.

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Goal 1 – Iowa College Student Aid Commission has funding that supports and enhances its services.

Lead: Todd Brown

Team: Deb Krueger, Jeremy Davis, Bobbi Pulley, Julie Leeper

Measures:

- **Dollar amount of federal funds received**
- **Dollar amount of state funds received**
- **Dollar amount of grant funds received**
- **Operational costs**
- **Amount of fee revenues**

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Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By
<p>a. Win support for federal funding of localized services.</p> <p><i>This strategy supports the governor's goal of reducing the cost of government by 15 percent by promoting efficiency and funding from alternative sources.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Determine needed services. Communicate need for services to be funded. Increased communication with federal legislators. Increased communication with United States Department of Education. Work with partners to advocate for fundraising. 	<p>Lead: Jeremy Davis Karen Misjak</p> <p>Team: Julie Leeper Carolyn Small</p>	<p>Completed by Federal Fiscal Year 2011</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> March 15, 2010 April 1, 2010 March 30, 2010 March 30, 2010 May 1, 2010
<p>b. Win support for state funding of localized services.</p> <p><i>This strategy promotes postsecondary educational access and opportunity in support of the governor's goal of increasing family income by 25 percent.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Determine needed services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential consolidation of state aid programs Consolidation of funding pools Communicate need for services to be funded. Increased communication with state legislators. Increased communication with other state agencies. Work with partners to advocate for programs and funding. 	<p>Lead: Julie Leeper Jeremy Davis</p> <p>Team: Todd Brown Karen Misjak</p>	<p>Completed by end of Legislative Session 2011</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> September 1, 2010 December 31, 2010 January 31, 2011 January 31, 2011 February 28, 2011
<p>c. Reduce Operational costs.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Create expenditure classification system. 	<p>Lead: Deb Krueger Karen Misjak</p>	<p>Completed by May Commission Meeting</p>

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<p>This strategy promotes operational efficiency in support of the governor's goal of reducing the cost of government by 15 percent.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Classify expenditures using expenditure classification system. Prioritize expenses. Reduce expenses using prioritization system. Increase efficiencies in IT, employee processes (LEAN), reduction in paper 	<p>Team: Directors Jeremy Davis</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> March 15, 2010 April 1, 2010 April 15, 2010 May 1, 2010 On-going
<p>d. Increase grant dollars</p> <p>This strategy supports the governor's goal of reducing the cost of government by 15 percent by increasing funding from alternative sources.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Explore creation of 501(c) 3. Identify available grant funding. Apply for eligible grant funds. Request support from partners for grant application\selection. WIN Grants. Perform necessary steps to implement and keep grant funds. 	<p>Lead: Jeremy Davis Tony Girardi</p> <p>Team: David VanCompernelle Karen Misjak Deb Krueger</p>	<p>Completed by state fiscal year 2011</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> May 1, 2010 Start July 1, 2010 then on-going On-going for each grant
<p>e. Create a centralized student debt collection repository.</p> <p>This strategy supports the governor's goal of reducing the cost of government by 15 percent by promoting efficiency and funding from alternative sources.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Attorney General to determine legal requirements. Determine fee structure. Get partner buy-in (Legislature, Regents and Community Colleges). Cost benefits analysis. Create in-house collection system. Create file transfer process. Implement accounting and collector procedures. 	<p>Lead: Bobbi Pulley</p> <p>Team: David VanCompernelle</p>	<p>Completion Date: July 1, 2012</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> September 1, 2010 September 1, 2010 Legislative Session 2011 December 31, 2011 December 31, 2011 December 31,

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- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 8. Collect money. | 2011 |
| 9. Implement billing process. | 7. December 31, 2011 |
| | 8. July 1, 2012 |
| | 9. July 1, 2012 |

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| f. Determine if fee based services can be implemented.

This strategy supports the governor's goal of reducing the cost of government by 15 percent by promoting efficiency and funding from alternative sources. | 1. Work with Attorney General to determine legal requirements.
2. Identify services that may have a potential fee attached to the product.
3. Determine a fee structure.
4. Identify if partners are available.
5. Cost benefits analysis.
6. Create a transfer of product system.
7. Procure contract for product fee with partner.
8. Collect revenue. | Lead:
Todd Brown

Team:
State IT
David VanCompernelle
Adam Messer
Bobbi Pulley | Completion Date:
July1, 2012

1. July 1, 2010
2. May 1, 2010
3. May 1, 2010
4. June 1, 2010
5. July 1, 2011
6. June 30, 2011
7. June 30, 2011
8. April 1, 2012
9. July 1, 2010 |
|---|---|---|---|

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| g. Develop a plan for creating a centralized scholarship clearing-house.

This strategy supports the governor's goal of reducing the cost of government by 15 percent by promoting efficiency and funding from alternative sources. | 1. Work with Attorney General to determine legal requirements.
2. Determine fee structure.
3. Identify willing participants. (each participant needs a cost benefits analysis)
4. Build partner requirements into system. | Lead:
Todd Brown

Team:
David VanCompernelle
State IT
Bobbi Pulley
Deb Krueger | Completion Date:
September, 2012

1. July 1, 2010
2. July 1, 2010
3. September 1, 2010
4. January 1, 2012 |
|---|--|---|---|

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5. File transfer process.	5. January 1, 2012
6. Implement internal staff processes.	6. January 1, 2012
7. Implement institutional\awarding notifications.	7. January 1, 2012
8. Implement disbursement system.	8. January 1, 2012
9. Award funds.	9. Academic Year 2012-2013
10. Implement billing process.	10. Academic Year 2012-2013

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Goal 2 – Iowa students and families plan, prepare, and pay for education beyond high school.

Lead: Heather Doe

Team: Nancy Ankeny, Julie Ntem, Todd Brown, John Gilman

Measures:

- **Number of web visits**
- **Number of new IHAPI accounts**
- **Number of total IHAPI accounts**
- **Number of publication orders**
- **Number of students completing the Iowa Financial Aid Application**
- **Number of students completing the FAFSA**
- **Cohort Default Rate**
- **Number of financial literacy courses completed and passed**
- **GEAR UP survey responses**

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a. Create a cost effective communication plan.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define audiences 2. Evaluate current communications 3. Define communication objective 4. Define goals to achieve each objective 5. Identify tools that will be used to accomplish goals 6. Monitor and revise annually 	Lead: Heather Doe Todd Brown	Annually
<p>This strategy supports the governor's goal of reducing the cost of government by 15 percent by promoting efficiency. In addition, this strategy promotes postsecondary educational access and opportunity in support of the governor's goal of increasing family income by 25 percent.</p>			
b. Increase the number of outreach channels.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct need analysis. 2. Determine objectives 3. Research and identify potential strategies. 4. Engage partners to assist in efforts (when applicable) 5. Implement strategies 6. Evaluate and monitor. 	Lead: Nancy Ankeny John Gilman	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May 1, 2010 2. May 1, 2010 3. Ongoing 4. Ongoing 5. Ongoing 6. Ongoing & Annually
<p>This strategy supports the governor's goal of reducing the cost of government by 15 percent by promoting efficiency. In addition, this strategy promotes postsecondary educational access and opportunity in support of the governor's goal of increasing family income by 25 percent.</p>			
c. Develop and implement a statewide financial literacy plan.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine objectives. 2. Review and evaluate current services. 3. Determine budget, personnel 4. Follow state procurement procedures 	Lead: Julie Ntem Nancy Ankeny	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May 1, 2010 2. May 1, 2010 3. May 1, 2010 4. September 1, 2010
<p>This strategy promotes postsecondary educational access and affordability. It is consistent with the governor's goal of increasing family income by 25 percent.</p>			

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	5. Launch program		5. February, 2011
	6. Encourage statewide usage		6. On-going
	7. Evaluate and monitor.		7. On-going
d. Help students and families make informed decisions about career options and educational choices.	1. Determine objectives and audience needs.	Lead: Todd Brown Nancy Ankeny John Gilman	On-going
	3. Determine budget, personnel, and partnership opportunities.		
This strategy promotes the governor's goal of increasing family income by 25 percent.	3. Review and evaluate ways to reach audience within budgetary and personnel constraints.		
	4. Finalize plan and implement plan.		
	5. Evaluate and monitor.		
e. Decrease risk of default.	1. Determine objectives.	Lead:	1. May 1, 2010
	2. Review and evaluate current services.	Heather Doe Julie Ntem	2. May 1, 2010
This strategy promotes postsecondary educational affordability. It is consistent with the governor's goal of increasing family income by 25 percent.	3. Determine budget, personnel, and partnership opportunities.		3. June 1, 2010
	4. Follow State procurement procedures.		4. August 1, 2010
	5. Work with vendor on program content.		5. June 1, 2011
	6. Launch program		6. October, 2011
	7. Encourage statewide usage		7. On-going
	8. Evaluate and monitor		8. On-going

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Goal 3 – Iowa College Student Aid Commission is Iowa's partner for value added higher education information and resources.

Lead: Julie Leeper
Team: Tony Girardi, Dan Powers, Bhupesh Singu

Measures:

- Number of reports created.
- Number of partners.
- Number of data inquiries.
- Number of web views of identified value added reports.

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Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By
a. Implement a plan of collecting and maintaining higher education information and provide value-added information in support of postsecondary education access. This strategy promotes postsecondary educational access and opportunity in support of the governor's goal of increasing family income by 25 percent.	1. Determine objectives related to collecting and maintaining higher education information. 2. Identify audiences and needs. 3. Establish collaborative partnerships. 4. Develop a plan for collecting, maintaining, and reporting higher education data based on audiences' needs. (Identify data sources, availability, collection procedures, recipients, formats, reporting methods, etc.). 5. Implement data collection, maintenance, and reporting plan. 6. Monitor results. 7. Adapt plan as needed.	Lead: Julie Leeper Team: Tony Girardi Dan Powers	9. January 1, 2010 10. ongoing 11. ongoing 12. July 1, 2010 13. ongoing 14. ongoing 15. ongoing

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SWOT Analysis – March 2010

Strengths

Weaknesses

Opportunities

Threats

Strengths

1. Staff
 - a. enthusiasm, dedication
 - b. diverse knowledge and talent (some of it untapped)
 - c. teamwork and working relationships
 - d. leadership
 - e. engaged with Commissioners
 - f. good contacts with state legislators and Congressional delegation
 - g. good use of resources
 - h. expertise
2. State Agency
 - a. reputation for transparency, neutrality, and service to Iowans
 - b. public's trust
 - c. real commitment to students and families
 - d. relative autonomy (e.g., with respect to contracts, operations, and direction)
3. Current Services and Roles
 - a. Serve diverse customers (students, families, schools, others)
 - b. Scholarship & Grant administration
 - c. IHaveaPlanIowa web portal
 - i. useful to all ages
 - ii. state law requirement for 8th graders to have 4-year plans
 - d. Services to Schools
 - i. compliance and regulatory guidance resource
 - ii. campus-based services
 - iii. training
 - e. Information to the public

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- i. agency's role in promoting postsecondary education and its benefits
 - ii. student-aid related publications
 - iii. Information Service Center
- f. grants
 - i. GEAR UP Iowa
- g. Information Technology

Weaknesses

1. Resources
 - a. limited resources (and far-reaching goals—"doing more with less"; disconnect between funding and aspirations)
 - b. staff shortage; insufficient staff to do what we want to do
 - c. budget cuts
2. Uncertainty
 - a. Federal Family Education Loan Program
 - i. federal changes
 - ii. departure of lenders
 - iii. schools moving to Direct Loan Program
 - b. Guaranty agency roles, responsibilities
 - c. revenue
 - d. broader economy
 - e. state-level (state budget cuts, etc.)
3. Issues Related to Partnerships, Communication and Agency Identity
 - a. Agency's relative anonymity
 - b. communication and collaboration with other state agencies
 - c. communication with business and industry
4. Issues Related to Services and Processes
 - a. the need to strengthen services that create the most value
 - b. costs associated with services; e.g., human resources, travel,
 - c. need for still greater efficiencies in processes

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Opportunities

1. Opportunities Related to Communication and Agency Identity
 - a. the opportunity to be seen as an innovative
 - b. the opportunity to establish a new, stronger reputation
 - c. opportunity to secure new roles; acquire a greater role
2. Customers and Partners
 - a. the opportunity to work with new constituencies and to work better, more closely with existing constituencies
 - i. high school faculty and counselors
 - ii. college admissions offices or student services
 - iii. minority students
 - iv. non- traditional students
 - b. Let partners help us identify needs and make improvements to services
 - c. Let partners help us promote services
 - d. the opportunity build, maintain, and strengthen partnerships with other entities
 - i. state agencies
 - ii. to work with the U.S. Department of Education, with the Iowa College Student Aid Commission as service provider
 - iii. scholarship providers (e.g. in connection with web portal)
 - e. the opportunity to win and get help from our advocates
 - i. schools who can help us to lobby Congress, etc.
3. Services, Programs,
 - a. financial aid administration
 - b. IHaveaPlanIowa - continued enhancements and
 - c. GEAR UP Iowa
 - d. Initiatives
 - i. default prevention
 - ii. Financial Literacy
 - iii. college planning
 - iv. career planning
 - v. advocacy
 - e. research
 - f. publications and information resources for the general public
 - g. grant funding opportunities
 - h. postsecondary registration
4. Opportunity for Staff growth, professional development

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Threats

1. The discontinuation of FFELP
 - a. no Federal legislative action, no defined role, no revenue source, schools transition to Direct Lending
2. Financial Threats
 - a. shrinking operating fund
 - b. decreased loan portfolio
3. Competition
 - a. college and career planning, financial literacy, default prevention, etc.
 - b. guaranty services; increasing competition in guarantor community
 - c. grant funding to provide college access programs
4. State
 - a. state hiring freeze
 - b. state budget cuts and cuts to state grants and scholarships programs
 - c. state government re-organization
5. Other
 - a. impact of the economy on students, families, schools
 - b. lack of public awareness
 - c. lack of FFELP participation among colleges
 - d. Technology - threats to information security
 - e. staffing; loss of staff, ongoing vacancies

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Important Strategic Issues

1. Agency's mission – the need to assist students and families
2. change, uncertainty, and the need to adapt
3. The agency's role as a guarantor and the meaning of that role in the post-FFELP world
4. Funding & Resources
5. Communication, Relationships, Partnerships
 - a. developing a reputation
 - b. creating public awareness
 - c. Maintaining effective partnerships and relationships with customers and partners, including colleges and universities, K-12, business and industry, state agencies philanthropic organizations, and other organizations that serve students and families
 - d. working with partners to develop and deliver products and services where possible
6. Increasing student and family diversity; addressing the needs of minority populations; English-language-learning students and families; non-traditional students
7. Services
 - a. the value and relevance of services; how they address customers' needs; e.g.,
 - i. IHaveaPlanIowa
 - ii. GEAR UP Iowa
 - b. effectiveness (in reducing default rates; increasing retention; financial literacy)
 - c. Keeping up with technology (costs, security)
 - d. developing new products and services (e.g., financial literacy, default prevention, college access; research; higher education data)
 - e. maintaining knowledge base and organization's expertise (particularly in a changing environment)
 - f. Keeping up with staffing needs -staffing at adequate levels to meet changes in services

What programs or services should we start?

1. None.
2. Become more active in early childhood development as it pertains to college access.
3. Financial Literacy – work with educators to develop curriculum which addresses Iowa Core Curriculum requirements and 21st Century Skills.
4. Default Prevention - be able to help colleges and universities profile their defaulters and create proactive default prevention plans to help reduce Iowa's growing default rate.
5. Retention - help colleges retain students.
6. Helping at-risk and 1st generation students succeed
7. Advisory groups for IHaveaPlanIowa and other initiatives
8. Online statements for loans and ability to pay online
9. More interactive features on our website
10. Address increasing diversity—the needs of minority populations; non-English-speaking
11. Become a 501 (c) (3) Continue to identify programs that help students and parents understand how to prepare, plan and pay for higher education

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12. A foundation for college attendance would help fund programs for students; perhaps support the GEAR UP program.
13. Determine how to serve students in all of the state appropriated programs. Grant dollars to students instead of institutions.
14. Shared expectation model for State Grant Awarding
15. We need to move to products and services that are not related to the loan program but that are funded through means other than the loan programs operation fund.
16. A web-enhanced real-time communications vehicle

What programs or services should we stop or reduce?

1. None.
2. college visits
3. It's Payback Time (Is it being used?)
4. Consolidate the number of state aid programs. Reduce the number of state aid programs to one or to just a few major programs.
5. Reduce paper copies/handouts/brochures/etc. that can be delivered via the website or internet.
6. The end of FFELP will partly determine the services to be reduced or stopped; i.e., based on funding streams
7. Evaluate current products and services and eliminate what is either ineffective, not used, not adding value
8. loan programs "value-added" services; i.e., items that are not required by federal regulations

What programs or services should we expand?

1. The Iowa Financial Aid Application - expand on our seamlessness with colleges and universities to get applications online
2. Default Prevention
3. Financial Literacy
4. Client services
5. Retention consultation
6. Higher Education Research - Report more Iowa data
7. Regulatory Compliance - school reviews and training
8. Career and College Planning
9. seek more grant-funding opportunities
10. programs for low income students
11. programs for non-traditional students
12. Student assistants
13. IHaveaPlanIowa
 - a. make it a true "cradle-to-grave" tool
 - b. Get other state agencies buy in to the portal so it becomes a true statewide web portal for citizens no matter their age
14. Borrower referral program
15. Web services -- continue to seek additional ways to serve students and their families through the web portal and other technology.
16. Legislative lobbying
17. Expand partnerships for GEAR UP
18. More programs for the general public